

P a t e n t c l a i m s

1. A method for transporting TDM (Time Division Multiplex) time slots of a circuit switched connection from a first circuit switched node to a second circuit switched node through a packet switched network including a number of packet switched nodes, the circuit and packet switched nodes are all having the characteristics of a Multiprotocol Label Switch (MPLS),
characterized in the following steps:
 - 10 in the first circuit switched node, encapsulating the time slots in a data frame adjusted to be transferred in the packet switched network,
 - 15 stacking the data frame with at least one inner MPLS label uniquely addressing a PCM system within the second circuit switched node and/or at least one outer MPLS label identifying a fixed path of consecutive packet switched nodes within the packet switched network.
2. Method according to claim 1,
20 characterized in the following additional step:
 - in the second circuit switched node, removing the outer MPLS label and transferring the time slots to the PCM system addressed by the inner label.
- 25 3. Method according to claim 1 or 2,
characterized in that the outer label includes addresses of all the packet switched nodes included in the fixed path in addition to an address of the second circuit switched node.

4. Method according to claim 1 or 2,
characterized in the following additional
steps:

5 in the first node, including the address of the first
packet switched node of the fixed path as the outer
label,

10 and, in each of the consecutive packet switched
nodes, exchanging the content of the outer label with
the address of the packet switched node following
current packet switched node or, if current packet
switched node is the last packet switched node of the
fixed path, with the address of the second circuit
switched node.

15 5. Method according to one of the preceding claims,
characterized in that the first and the
second circuit switched nodes are Label Edge Routers
(LERs) and the packet switched nodes are Label Switched
Routers (LSRs).

20 6. Method according to one of the preceding claims,
characterized in that the circuit switched
connection is a 64 kbit/s connection and the number of
time slots in the data frame is 32 or 24.

25 7. Method according to one of the preceding claims,
characterized in that the first and/or the
second circuit switched node are/is (an) exchange(s) in
(a) public telephone network(s).

30 8. Method according to one of the preceding claims,
characterized in that the circuit switched
connection is a real-time connection like a telephone call
connection.